
SERVICE BULLETIN

COVID-19 and Unemployment Benefits



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Please be advised that the Federal Unemployment Insurance program, administered by the individual state agencies, will be a source of financial assistance for associates who are unemployed due to business shutdowns or unpaid workplace quarantines resulting from the coronavirus pandemic. Although current eligibility rules still apply, there are several states considering waiver of the work search and waiting week requirements should a claimant's employment status be a direct result of COVID-19. Eligibility for associates who elect self-quarantine due to concerns regarding coronavirus when continuing work is available will be determined on a case by case basis by the individual state agencies. Consideration is also being made by the agencies to not charge individual employer accounts for benefits paid if the unemployment is a direct result of COVID-19.

The U.S. Department of Labor is closely monitoring the situation to ensure the UI program remains operational and that the financial assistance intended for workers unemployed through no fault of their own is not disrupted. Proposals and suggestions have been made to the state legislative bodies to consider making modifications of current laws with the intent to make it easier for displaced workers to receive UI benefits as a result of the pandemic. Also, although not currently a source of financial assistance for displaced workers, in the event Disaster Unemployment Assistance (DUA) benefits become available, additional communications will be published. DUA benefits are currently made available when a Presidential declaration of a natural disaster has been made, and the unemployed worker has filed for, and been found ineligible for regular UI benefits. Consideration is also being made regarding changes in the eligibility requirements for DUA benefits to further assist unemployed workers impacted by COVID-19.

Our office will be monitoring the situation closely and will send out additional announcements or make postings on our website (www.thomas-and-company.com) as we become aware of the state specific modifications related to the administration of the state UI programs.